charges on export shipments of sugar with a view to promote export of sugar. In respect of release of sugar for the months of July and August, 2002, such release have been made on monthly basis. The impact of these measures is yet to be seen.

(c) and (d) The Central Government has amended the Sugar Development Fund Act, 1982 for providing financial assistance for bagasse based co-generation of power and production of ethanol from alcohol. These measures are expected to help the sugar industry in improving its viability.

Decontrol of Sugar Prices

2373. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the 'Financial Express' dated the 1st July, 2002 captioned "Monthly quota may dampen sugar decontrol";

(b) if so, whether Government have examined the report;

(c) whether this decision was taken by Government in view of sugar prices at Rs. 1,350-1,400 per quintal in April-June, 2002, which was 14-15 per cent down from Rs. 1550-1600 levels of April-June, 2001; and

(d) if so, to what extent Government have been able to help the sugar industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The sugar prices have marginaly declined during the past six months. The Government has allowed introduction of Forward/Future Trading in sugar with a view to ensure certain degree of price stability. Government has also framed the rules for reimbursement of internal

transport and freight charges on export shipments of sugar with a view to promote export of sugar. In respect of releases of sugar for the months of July and August, 2002, such releases have been made on monthly basis. The impact of these measures is yet to be seen.

Misappropriation of PDS Commodities by Andhra Pradesh

2374. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether CAG's recent report has indicted Andhra Pradesh for misappropriating PDS commodities allocated to the State for distribution amongst the poor through PDS;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what corrective measures Government have taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM-RAJU): (a) to (c) Yes Sir. CAG's report No. 3 of 2000 on Public Distribution System has pointed out that PDS commodities worth Rs. 8.21 crores were misappropriated in the State of Andhra Pradesh, upto March, 1999.

Relevant extracts of the CAG's report were sent to the State Government of Andhra Pradesh to investigate the matter and initiate suitable disciplinary action.

The State Government of Andhra Pradesh has reported that 15,639 cases were booked on account of illegal diversion of PDS items in Andhra Pradesh and 15,045 persons were arrested from 1992 to 1999.

Foodgrains to BPL Families

†2375 SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have failed to provide foodgrains to the BPL families as per prescribed norms;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.